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Additional Noteworthy Herpetological Records for Illinois

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A program of rather intensive field work by the senior author directed toward a survey of the Illinois herpetofauna has yielded several noteworthy discoveries. The present paper, second of a series reporting distributional records of more than ordinary interest, consists of four extensions of known ranges, resulting from several trips recently made by us into southwestern Illinois. It is hoped that these records may point out lesser known portions of the state and encourage further collecting by others in the areas found to be of especial interest.

Masticophis flagellum flagellum (Shaw)

In October of 1948, a large coachwhip snake was seen two miles south of Fults, Monroe County, Illinois. Unfortunately, it escaped by diving over a bluff. Subsequently, however, two **DOR** specimens were secured (INHS 4323, three and one-half miles south of Fults; and 4376, one and one-half miles south of Fults). These appear to be the first Illinois specimens of this species to reach a museum collection. Both are juveniles, measuring 371 and 404 mm. in length. Scutellation is as follows: ventrals 207 and 200; subcaudals 95 and 91; scale rows 17-16-13 and 17-15-13. Both retain the juvenile pattern of creamy white markings on the labials, preoculars, and postoculars; ventral spots tending to form longitudinal stripes; and distinct transverse bands anterodorsally.

Elaphe laeta laeta (Baird and Girard)

One specimen (INHS 4324), found **DOR** one and one-half miles north of Prairie du Rocher, Randolph County, Illinois, authenticates the occurrence of the prairie rat snake in Illinois and appears to be the first record of this species east of the Mississippi River. Although not previously recorded far-

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ther east than central Missouri, Dr. H. K. Gloyd had informed us of sight records of this species in western Illinois* and had advised us to collect in that portion of the state. Our specimen, a male 1172 mm. long, has 212 ventrals, 67 subcaudals, 47 dorsal blotches, and a scale row formula of 25-27-19. It is somewhat atypical in the boldness of the dorsal pattern and the ventral blotches but is unmistakable in the scutellation and head pattern.

Tantilla gracilis hallowelli Cope

On June 1, 1949, a specimen of the black-headed snake was collected by the authors along a bluff bordering the Mississippi floodplain four miles southeast of Aldridge, Union County, Illinois. The discovery of this species in Illinois is not surprising, for it has been collected immediately across the Mississippi from Illinois at St. Louis, Missouri. It has not been reported, however, from the counties in the eastern bulge of Missouri south of St. Louis, which is the portion of that state opposite Union County, Illinois. Moreover, this is the first record of either subspecies of *Tantilla gracilis* east of the Mississippi River. There is a possibility that it occurs along the east bluffs of the Mississippi from East St. Louis southward in Illinois and possibly also in similar places in Kentucky and Tennessee.

The Illinois specimen (INHS 3975) is a good example of the northern subspecies, *Tantilla gracilis hallowelli*, as recently resurrected by Kirn, Burger, and Smith (1949). It is a male 162 mm. long with 124 ventrals, 51 subcaudals, and a ratio of tail length to total length of .235. The number of ventrals falls well within the range of variation reported by the above authors for *hallowelli*, while the values for the subcaudals and relative tail length fall barely within the arbitrary limits used in their diagnosis. This is in full accord with their emphasis of the importance of the number of ventrals and is an excellent correlation for a single specimen.

Agkistrodon piscivorus leucostoma (Troost)

Five specimens of the cottonmouth were secured as follows: INHS 3674 and 4331-2 two miles south, 4333 one and one-half miles south, and 4434 one mile south of Fults, Monroe County, Illinois. These specimens provide the northernmost recent record in Illinois. Garman (1892), on

*Philip D. Evans of Kansas City, Missouri, states that some years ago he saw a living specimen of *Elaphe laeta* which was said to have been caught on the Illinois side of the Mississippi River near Alton, Madison County. The person who had it is thought to have given the true locality but would not part with the snake.

the authority of Ridgway, lists Wabash County as the northernmost Illinois locality. No specimens from this area are extant, however, and several attempts to find the species along the lower Wabash and Ohio Rivers have thus far met with failure. In the Mississippi valley Murphysboro has been hitherto the northernmost locality (Gloyd and Conant, 1943, p. 165, map 2). Our discovery of these snakes some 60 miles farther up the river is noteworthy only inasmuch as others have failed to record the species north of Jackson County in spite of rather thorough and continuous collecting in southwestern Illinois. Four of the five specimens are adults, the largest measuring 1041 mm. All were found crossing the road between the river bluff and floodplain.

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